

## Radio Amateurs Prepared To Maintain Contact With World

By TERRY McHALE

Because a handful of its residents have coupled an intense interest in their hobby with a realization of emergency needs, Green Bay can be sure of dependable communications with the rest of the world if normal contacts are cut off.

A group of 26 area residents, radio amateurs or "hams," are prepared to offer their services and equipment should an emergency arise. The group is banded together in a unit of the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps, a step-child of the American Radio Relay League. The corps is now beginning its 18th year of service to the nation.

The local group is headed by Oliver Davis, whose profession is also concerned with radio. In addition to membership in the national emergency organization, the unit is a part of the disaster preparedness committee of the American Red Cross and of the communications division of the Brown County Civil Defense organization, under the direction of Peter Platten.

### 12 Mobile Units

Prepared for nearly all contingencies which may arise, the Green Bay group is equipped with portable stations and 12 mobile units which are able to completely cover the Green Bay area with a reliable communications system.

During the Easter flood of a year ago, it was found that the unit was lacking equipment that could be easily transported in small boats or carried on the operator's back. Members of the corps, feeling it necessary to meet this need, have constructed a number of hand carried units that can be easily transported to any location.

Assisting Davis in the corps are Barney Engels, who has charge of the Civil Defense activities; Robert Showers, in charge of the 10-meter, hand carried sets and the 10-meter network; Harrison Haskins, in charge of portable equipment;

and Orin Thompson, in charge of De Pere activities.

Earl Nelson has been of assistance to the corps in providing emergency power in portable installations.

To keep its members "on their toes," the corps stages a weekly drill and participates annually in a field day in June and a simulated emergency test each fall. A purpose of the programs is to test the Green Bay Community Emergency Plan, to provide the area with emergency communications facilities in the event of a disaster which might damage or incapacitate normal communications facilities.

### Formed In 1935

The radio emergency group was formed in 1935 as the American Radio Relay League Corps through an announcement in "QST," official journal of the ARRL. It began as a volunteer program, but its rapid growth soon made necessary more formal arrangements. It got its first big test in the floods of 1936, after which the number of amateurs offering their services grew tremendously.

As a result of the obvious need for local leadership and group preparedness plans experienced in several communications emergencies, the ARRL created the office of emergency coordinator. In 1945, with the post-war reactivation of the ARRL Emergency Corps, a new section-level appointment, that of section emergency coordinator, was established. This office is held locally by Clayton Cardy of Sturgeon Bay. In 1950 the name of the organization was changed to Amateur Radio Emergency Corps, to better indicate the coverage and intent of the organization.

The Green Bay area organization is now working on plans to enable it to carry out still better emergency coverage for the territory. Its fall field test will be conducted in the near future, when additional equipment is made available.



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**Prepared To Serve**—Members of the Green Bay area unit of the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps are ready to serve the community in the event that normal means of communications are disrupted by a disaster. Hand radio sets have been added to the group's equipment, enabling operators such as Bob Showers, left, and Charles Manthey, in the lower picture, to communicate with each other, mobile units, or set stations, such as is operated by Kline Wilson, upper photo, a member of the East High Megacycle club.